



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

October 29, 1981

SECRET/SENSITIVE
MEMORANDUM

TO: EA - Ambassador Holdridge
 THRU: EA - Mr. O'Donohue
 FROM: EA/VLK - L. Desaix Anderson
 SUBJECT: Topics for Discussion at Meeting with NSC and CIA
on Thursday, October 29, 2:30 p.m.

We propose that the following topics be discussed at the meeting which [redacted] Don Gregg, David Gries, Jim Lilley, Dan and myself. 25X1

1) Khmer Resistance. We wish to confirm our common approach on a package of assistance to the non-communist Khmer and the rationale for such support. Dan and I have been doing missionary work with CIA and NSC and believe that we can agree to talk in our respective organizations from a common paper and proposal. We have informally discussed the attached paper with CIA and seek informal agreement at today's meeting to confirm this common approach.

2) We should discuss the growing Soviet military presence in Laos. The attached cable from Vientiane corroborates some information we held previously from sensitive sources. We have already agreed with INR on backgrounders in December for key press figures. In addition, we propose giving sanitized information from the attached Vientiane cable to the Thais, which they would leak in Bangkok and we would confirm here. We would like to get interagency agreement to this approach at today's meeting.

3) We plan to begin our approach to ASEAN, key congressional figures, and then the Vietnamese and Lao next week on the proposed mission on MIA's to Laos and Vietnam. We should confirm

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(XDS-3-10/29/01 ANDERSON, L. Desaix)

State Dept. review completed

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once again that the proposed mission will, in accordance with the President's directive, be strictly limited to POW/MIA matters and that there will be no discussion of other issues, including political subjects such as Kampuchea. Any Vietnamese attempt to discuss such subjects should be deflected with a statement that USG positions on these subjects are well known to Hanoi and have been conveyed through other channels. The mission has nothing to add.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Memorandum on Possible US Support
for the Non-Communist Khmer Resistance
- 2) Vientiane 1026

Drafted: EA/VLK:LDAnderson

SECRET/SENSITIVE

SECRET/SENSITIVEMEMORANDUM ON POSSIBLE US SUPPORT FOR THE
NON-COMMUNIST KHMER RESISTANCE

The USG has deferred proposals for assistance to the non-communist Khmer resistance, awaiting results of efforts to form a coalition, and a unified call from ASEAN urging a U.S. role. Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand have now strongly urged US support, including military support. They have recognized, however, our concern about any direct US military involvement to Indochina and encouraged use of ASEAN conduits, principally Thai. Singapore particularly has emphasized US involvement as the test of genuine US support for the ASEAN strategy. Failure to respond has been interpreted by some as a tilt toward China regarding Kampuchea. We have thus far deflected these high-level approaches by saying that we are considering ASEAN's position and Khmer factional developments.

Differing threat perceptions in ASEAN regarding China, the Soviets and Vietnamese color ASEAN attitudes toward the Khmer resistance and Kampuchea strategy. While Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia favor development of a non-communist component, Malaysia emphasizes the third force as a device to shut out Chinese influence and eventually reach an accommodation with Vietnam. The Philippines follows the consensus. Indonesia favors early accommodation with Vietnam and believes that an accommodated Vietnam without strong Soviet influence would not be a threat to Southeast Asia. Hanoi, well aware of this fault line, is actively attempting to lure Indonesia and Malaysia into separate

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accommodation.

Failure to find non-ASEAN support for the non-communists and failure to establish a coalition could seriously strain ASEAN and jeopardize the ASEAN consensus. Our failure to respond to ASEAN appeals is regarded as a lack of support and could trigger a major reevaluation by ASEAN of the entire strategy. Indonesia and others could push for accommodation with Vietnam. ASEAN could split on the crucial issue of Kampuchean strategy. The choice would then polarize between outcomes which are starkly either accommodation with Vietnam or support for China's apparent efforts to return the Khmer Rouge to power in Phnom Penh.

Key congressional figures who have generally supported our Indochina policy (Solarz and Pritchard) have indicated that the Congress cannot support an administration policy which allows no choice but the return of the Khmer Rouge or Vietnamese domination of Kampuchea.

While the capabilities of the non-communist resistance, particularly militarily, are an open question, they have come further during the past year than we might have anticipated.

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We should respond with a limited non-military package which demonstrates our commitment, but keeps ASEAN in front and only supplements what they might do.

While ASEAN will be disappointed with a small US response, a limited non-military and financial response to a unified ASEAN appeal should satisfy the political requirement of support for ASEAN without engaging US in major involvement in Indochinese resistance activities.

Proposed Assistance Package for Non-Communist Khmer Resistance

In light of the above, we propose a limited, non-military package along the following lines. This proposal would be contingent on formation of a coalition (or a suitable alternative arrangement), completion of Singapore and Malaysia's assessment of the KPNLF, and a unified ASEAN (including at least Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia) approach. We would anticipate formation of a mechanism, through the Thais, to integrate our assistance within the consortium.

Overt:

-- Increased humanitarian food assistance on the border.
An increase of approximately one million dollars has al-

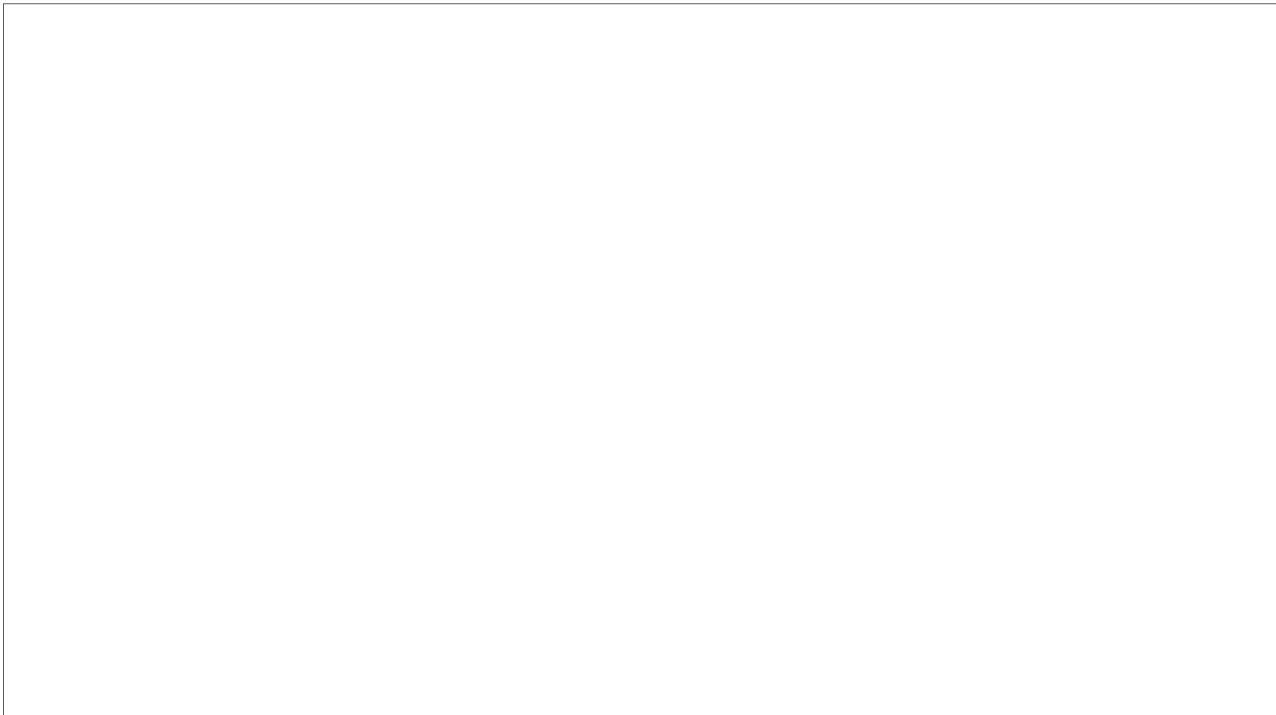
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ready been programmed from FY 1981 funds. We will consider augmentation in FY 82 as circumstances dictate.

-- We would increase FMS credits to Thailand. No direct transfer to Kampuchea would be envisaged. We have already reprogrammed an additional \$3.4 million in FMS credits for Thailand from FY 81 funds, telling the Thais that the increase was in recognition of Thailand's increased burden associated with Kampuchea. We will also look for a small additional sum in FMS credits in FY 82.

Covert:



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INCOMING
TELEGRAM

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INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 INR-05 EUR-08 SS-14 CIAE-00 NSC-05
NSAE-00 PM-03 SP-02 /044 W

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R 270830Z OCT 81
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2099
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL UDORN
USMISSION USNATO
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
DIA WASHDC
PACAF HICKAM AFB HI

SECRET SECTION 01 OF 02 VIENTIANE 1026

LIMDIS

E.O. 12065: RDS-4 10/27/11 (MOSE, LEO J.) OR-M
TAGS: MARR, PEPR, LA, UR, TH, PINR
SUBJECT: SOVIET AIR BASE IN LAOS

REF: (A) VIENTIANE 0285, (B) STATE 096410, (C) CANBERRA 3201,
(D) FBIS BK 041041 AUG 81, (E) 88 VIENTIANE 1059,
(F) VIENTIANE 0197, (G) VIENTIANE 0387

1. (S - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. (BEGIN SUMMARY) THE SOVIET UNION IS REPORTEDLY ENGAGED IN MILITARY CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES IN THE PLAIN OF JARS AREA OF LAOS, FOCUSING ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SOVIET-MANNED AIR BASE IN XIANGKHOANG PROVINCE. IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER THESE ACTIVITIES INVOLVE SUPPORT FOR LPDR ARMED FORCES OR CONSTITUTE A DIRECT SOVIET MILITARY BUILD-UP IN LAOS. (END SUMMARY)

3. LPDR CIVIL AND MILITARY AVIATION PERSONNEL (STRICTLY PROTECT) BASED IN XIANGKHOANG AND VIENTIANE, WHO HAVE PROVIDED US WITH RELIABLE INFORMATION IN THE PAST, REPORT THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS EXPANDING THE AIRFIELD AT PHONESAVAN (UG1452) TO ACCOMMODATE PERMANENT BASING OF MIG-21 FIGHTERS AND TO PERMIT EXPANDED CARGO TRAFFIC BY AN-12, AN-24 AND 26, AND TU-154 AIRCRAFT. CONSTRUCTION BEGAN AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR WHEN SCORES OF SOVIET MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL CARRIED OUT SURVEYS AND BROKE GROUND FOR A NEW RUNWAY. AFTER INITIAL CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES, HOWEVER, THESE PERSONNEL WERE DRAWN DOWN TO ABOUT 20 PERSONS, ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCES. THEY SAY THAT LPLA ENGINEERS AND WORK BRIGADES ARE NOW CARRYING OUT CONSTRUCTION OF EXPANDED RUNWAY AREA AND BARRACKS/HOUSING, REPORTEDLY FOR SOVIET PERSONNEL UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF SOVIET ADVISORS. OTHER SOVIET ADVISORS FREQUENTLY VISIT PHONESAVAN FOR DAYS/WEEKS AT A TIME. SOURCES DO NOT KNOW TECHNICAL DETAILS SUCH AS LENGTH OF MAJOR RUNWAY. A FEW SOVIET WIVES BUT NO CHILDREN ARE WITH SOME ADVISORS.

4. XIANGKHOANG-BASED LPDR AVIATION OFFICIAL REPORTS THAT LPLA PERSONNEL HAVE TOLD HIM THAT TWELVE MIG-21'S CURRENTLY BASED AT VIENTIANE'S WATTAY AIRPORT WILL BE TRANSFERRED TO PHONESAVAN WHEN THE NEW BASE IS FINISHED "SOMETIME IN 1982." LPLA MILITARY PERSONNEL CITE AS THE PRIMARY MOTIVATION FOR REBASING THE VULNERABILITY OF THESE AIRCRAFT AT THEIR PRESENT LOCATION SO NEAR THAILAND. THE XIANGKHOANG OFFICIAL TOLD US THAT AT PRESENT ONLY ONE OR TWO MIG-21'S MAY LAND

AT PHONESAVAN, USUALLY FOR LESS THAN A DAY. HANGAR/SERVICING FACILITIES ARE NONEXISTENT FOR MIG'S; PHONESAVAN CAN CURRENTLY HANDLE ONLY LIMITED INCOMING CARGO FLIGHTS. SMALL AN-2 BIPLANES MAKE REGULAR RUNS TO PHONESAVAN FROM VIENTIANE, AS DO MI-6 AND MI-8 HELICOPTERS. HE ADDED THAT PLAIN OF JARS (THONG HAIHIN) AIRFIELD (UG0551) IS NOW VIRTUALLY SHUT DOWN, THAT IT IS TO BE USED "ONLY WHEN THERE IS AN EMERGENCY." XIANGKHOANG CONTACT STATED THAT LPLA PERSONNEL REPORT THAT "MANY DOZENS" OF SOVIET GROUND CREW AND "RED ARMY" PERSONNEL WILL EVENTUALLY BE BASED AT PHONESAVAN IN THE NEW BARRACKS AND HOUSES.

5. VIENTIANE-BASED LPDR AVIATION PERSONNEL REPORT THAT THERE ARE ABOUT TWELVE LAO MIG-21 PILOTS, ALL OF WHOM ARE PARTY MEMBERS. (OTHERS ARE UNDERGOING TRAINING IN THE SOVIET UNION -- (REF D.) THEY ALSO REPORT THAT IN ADDITION TO SOVIET GROUND PERSONNEL, THERE ARE TWELVE SOVIET MIG-21 "PILOTS." THEY REPORT NO RPT NO SRV PILOTS STATIONED AT WATTAY.

6. XIANGKHOANG OFFICIAL REPORTS THAT IN ADDITION TO SOVIET-SUPERVISED CONSTRUCTION AT PHONESAVAN AIRFIELD, UP TO

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INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 INR-05 EUR-08 SS-14 CIAE-00 NSC-05
NSAE-00 PM-03 SP-02 /B44 W

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CIVILIAN PRESENCE -- REFS E, F, G). IMPLICATIONS FOR THE
REGION -- PARTICULARLY THE REAL AND PERCEIVED SECURITY OF
THAILAND -- CAN BE NOTHING BUT DESTABILIZING.
MOSER

R 270830Z OCT 81
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2100
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL UDORN
USMISSION USNATO
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
DIA WASHDC
PACAF HICKAM AFB HI

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LIMDIS

A HUNDRED SOVIET MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE BUILDING A MILITARY
ACADEMY AT BAN PEN (NCA). HE STATED THAT HE HAS TALKED WITH
SOVIET OFFICER IDENTIFYING HIMSELF IN RANK AS A "GENERAL" WHO
OVERSEES CONSTRUCTION AT BAN PEN. IN ADDITION, SOVIET CIVILIAN
PERSONNEL ARE SETTING UP A STATE FARM NEAR LAT SENG (NCA).

7. RELATIONS BETWEEN LAO RESIDENTS AND SOVIETS AT THE PLAIN
OF JARS ARE NOT GOOD, REPORTS THE XIANGKHOUANG OFFICIAL.
SOVIETS HAVE A REPUTATION FOR COLDNESS, ARROGANCE AND CRUDENESS,
HE SAID. LOCAL RESIDENTS REGARD THEM AS "BARBARIC" BECAUSE
OF THEIR FREQUENT PUBLIC DRUNKENNESS, ROWDINESS, AND
POOR TABLE MANNERS. INCIDENTS OF RAPE OF LAO GIRLS BY SOVIET MALES
IS FREQUENT, SOMETIMES RESULTING IN SURGERY FOR THE BATTERED
VICTIM. THERE IS NO REDRESS FOR THE VICTIM OR HER FAMILY,
HE NOTED. HE ADDED THAT THE NUMEROUS PAVN TROOPS ARE ALSO REVILED
BY LOCAL LAO -- CIVILIAN AND MILITARY ALIKE. PAVN SOLDIERS
FREQUENTLY KILL, ROB AND RAPE. THEIR OFFICERS USUALLY ARREST THE
PERPETRATORS, ONLY TO RELEASE THEM TO ANOTHER UNIT ELSEWHERE.
THE OFFICIAL STATED THAT SRV TROOPS LIVE IN EXTREMELY POOR
CONDITIONS; THEY GROW MOST OF THEIR OWN FOOD. MOST LPLA
LOWER-LEVEL PERSONNEL SHUN CONTACT WITH PAVN.

8. SECURITY PROBLEMS POSE CERTAIN DANGERS AROUND PHONESAVAN,
ACCORDING TO THE XIANGKHOUANG OFFICIAL. HMONG "CHAO FA"
GUERRILLAS OCCASIONALLY ENGAGE LPLA AND PAVN IN FIRE FIGHTS.
DURING THE THIRD WEEK OF OCTOBER, FOR EXAMPLE, EIGHT LPLA
SOLDIERS ON GUARD DUTY NEAR THE AIRPORT WERE REPORTEDLY
GUNNED DOWN BY CHAO FA INSURGENTS IN DAYLIGHT. THEY LEFT BEHIND
A NOTE WHICH WARNED: "DON'T FOLLOW US." THE OFFICIAL STATED
THAT ALL LAO GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL AT PHONESAVAN FEAR CHAO FA
ATTACKS. HE KNEW OF NO INCIDENTS INVOLVING KILLINGS OF SOVIET
PERSONNEL, WHO, HE SAID, ALWAYS REMAIN UNDER TIGHT SECURITY GUARD.

9. COMMENT: IT IS UNCLEAR FROM THE INCOMPLETE INFORMATION AVAIL-
ABLE TO US WHETHER THE SOVIET UNION HAS AN "AGREEMENT" WITH THE
LPDR TO ESTABLISH AN ACTUAL "SOVIET" AIR BASE IN LAOS (REFS A,
B, C) OR WHETHER THERE IS A PLAN SIMPLY TO MOVE LPLA AIR FORCE
UNITS (AND ACCOMPANYING RUSSIAN ADVISORS) CURRENTLY
BASED AT VIENTIANE TO THE PLAIN OF JARS. SIMILARLY,
IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER EXPANDED CONSTRUCTION AT PHONESAVAN
AIRPORT AND ELSEWHERE MAY BE A FORM OF SOVIET "AID" TO LAOS
OR CONSTITUTES A DIRECT SOVIET BUILD-UP IN LAOS. WHAT IS CLEAR,
HOWEVER, IS THAT MOSCOW IS INVOLVING ITSELF TO A SIGNIFICANT
EXTENT IN THE MILITARY AFFAIRS OF THE LPDR. IN ANY CASE, THE
SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IS THAT THE SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE
IN LAOS APPEARS TO BE EXPANDING (ALONG WITH THE

SECRET